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Friday, 16 July 2010, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Ajumogobia	(Nigeria)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Čolaković
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Lebanon	Ms. Ziade
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Optimizing the use of preventive diplomacy tools: Prospects and challenges in Africa

Letter dated 9 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2010/371)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Optimizing the use of preventive diplomacy tools: Prospects and challenges in Africa

Letter dated 9 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2010/371)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Canada, Egypt, the Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took seats at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I wish to welcome the participation of the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, who is not here with us yet but will be joining us, Her Excellency Ms. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Sarah Cliffe, Special Representative and Director for the World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development of the World Bank.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Ms. Cliffe to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano, in which he requests to be invited, in his capacity as acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite His Excellency Mr. Serrano to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now being its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2010/371, which contains a letter dated 9 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Council recalls Articles 33 and 34 of the Charter and reaffirms its commitment to the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and the promotion of necessary preventive action in response to disputes or situations the continuation of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.

"The Security Council recalls that the prevention of conflict remains a primary responsibility of Member States. As such, actions undertaken within the framework of conflict prevention by United Nations entities must be designed to support and complement, as appropriate, the conflict prevention roles of national Governments.

"The Security Council notes that, consistent with its functions in relation to international peace and security, it seeks to remain engaged in all stages of the conflict cycle and in exploring ways of preventing the escalation of disputes into armed conflict or a relapse into armed conflict and the Council recalls that, in accordance with Articles 99 and 35 of the Charter, the Secretary-General or any Member State may bring to the attention of the Council any matter which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.

"The Security Council recalls that early warning, preventive diplomacy, preventive deployment, mediation, practical disarmament measures and post-conflict peacebuilding are interdependent and complementary components of a comprehensive conflict prevention strategy. The Council notes the importance of creating and maintaining peace through inclusive dialogue, reconciliation and re-integration.

"The Security Council reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and reiterates its call to increase the equal participation, representation and full involvement of women in preventive diplomacy efforts and all related decision-making processes with regard to conflict resolution and peacebuilding in line with resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), and 1889 (2009).

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of a comprehensive strategy comprising operational and structural measures for prevention of armed conflict, and encourages the development of measures to address the root causes of conflicts in order to ensure sustainable peace. The Council reaffirms the central role of the United Nations in this regard.

"The Security Council recalls its previous presidential statements concerning the various factors and causes that play a role in inciting, worsening or prolonging conflicts in Africa, and in particular the factors and causes that have been highlighted and addressed by the Council. The Council also notes that, especially in the context of Africa, implementation of effective security sector reform programmes, strengthening of human rights and the rule of law, protection of civilians, ensuring accountability, meaningful progress in sustainable economic development and poverty eradication, support for elections and the building of democratic institutions and effective control of small arms, inter alia, have become important elements of conflict prevention.

"The Security Council also recognizes the increased material, human and financial resources required by peacekeeping operations over the last decade. Accordingly, the Council acknowledges the potential benefits and efficiencies that could be achieved through an integrated approach to preventive diplomacy efforts similar to the approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding methods, which underscores the interrelationship between political, security, development, human rights and rule of law activities.

"The Security Council encourages the development of peaceful settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter and reiterates its support for the efforts of regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the East African Community, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) as regards conflict prevention. The Council acknowledges the need for closer and more operational cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in Africa to build national and regional capacities in relation to the preventive diplomacy tools of mediation, information gathering and analysis, early warning, prevention and peacemaking, and in this context the Council recognizes the important role regional United Nations offices, such as UNOWA, can play and stresses the valuable contribution of mediation capacities such as the Council of Elders, the Panel of the Wise and good offices of the Secretary-General and his special envoys, and of regional and subregional organizations, to ensuring the coherence, synergy and collective effectiveness of their efforts.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of continually engaging the potential and existing capacities and capabilities of the United Nations Secretariat, regional and subregional organizations as well as national Governments in preventive diplomacy efforts including mediation, and welcomes the promotion of regional approaches to the peaceful settlement of disputes.

"The Security Council further reiterates its support for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (the Commission) and recognizes the need for greater coordination with the Commission. The Council further recognizes the need for greater coherence with all relevant United Nations entities in relation to the most effective use of preventive diplomacy tools at their disposal. The Council recognizes the important role of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Offices in supporting national efforts to prevent conflicts and in addressing cross-border threats. The Council also recognizes the value the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa continues to add to the process of embedding preventive diplomacy practices into the Organization's conflict management architecture. In this connection, the Council recalls the role of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide in matters relating to the prevention and resolution of conflict. The Council emphasizes the need for the full engagement of all relevant actors, including civil society, to sustain the momentum and perspective for a meaningful preventive diplomacy framework.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of enhancing efforts, including coordination among relevant bilateral and multilateral donors, to ensure predictable, coherent and timely financial support to optimize the use of preventive diplomacy tools, including mediation, throughout the conflict cycle.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to submit, within 12 months of the adoption of this statement, a report making recommendations on how best to optimize the use of preventive diplomacy tools within the United Nations system and in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and other actors."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under symbol S/PRST/2010/14.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Nigeria.

Let me begin by saying how pleased and honoured I am to be presiding over this very important debate on the item on this morning's agenda, "Maintenance of international peace and security: Optimizing the use of preventive diplomacy tools: Prospects and challenges in Africa". I believe that this is an auspicious time to revisit the concept and practice of preventive diplomacy.

I also wish to especially acknowledge and to express my Government's appreciation to Council members and to all participants for the cooperation and support given to Nigeria during our presidency of the Council. Let me also especially extend a welcome to the Deputy Secretary-General and to Ms. Sarah Cliffe, Special Representative and Director for the World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development of the World Bank.

The theme of today's debate aims to capitalize on the extensive work under way throughout the United Nations to promote and preserve peace in an ever-changing world. It attests to my country's acknowledgement of the multifaceted challenges presented by the growth in scope, complexity and cost of current peacekeeping operations and the need to maintain the momentum gained over the past few decades in the field of conflict management through the use of preventive diplomacy. We are encouraged by the support we have received for this initiative from fellow Council members and others.

We live in a world in which violent conflict is an all too common feature in the daily lives of too many Africans. Fragile constitutional frameworks, limited natural resources and economic disparities can together render a State vulnerable to conflict.

The costs of such an outcome are high in terms of both human suffering and economic loss. Moreover, the socio-economic advances achieved through development efforts are also often lost. Add to this the price of warfare and peacekeeping operations, and the resulting figures are staggering.

In unanimously adopting resolution 1625 (2005), the Council expressed the need to adopt a conflict prevention strategy that addresses the root causes of armed conflict. Aspects of preventive diplomacy have since found their way into several peacebuilding programmes. An example of this is the Department of Political Affairs mediation assistance amid Kenya's post-electoral unrest in 2008. Furthermore, the United Nations has undertaken or supported regionally led political interventions to quell constitutional crises in Madagascar, Niger and Guinea within the past year alone. Indeed, Nigeria itself benefited from the preventive diplomacy efforts of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, when he mediated between my country and Cameroon after the ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the Bakassi peninsula dispute.

However, the humanitarian crises that persist in such places as the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo illustrate what the Secretary-General, in his 2008 report on conflict prevention (S/2008/18), characterized as a gap between rhetoric and reality.

While these developments are noteworthy, it is time to take stock. As at April 2010, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations estimated that its annual resources should rise from $7.87 billion to $8.4 billion. This uplift places additional strain on contributing nations in these already challenging times. It is our considered view that the potential savings for humanity make a compelling case for optimizing the use of preventive diplomacy tools.

The elements of the preventive diplomacy tool kit do not function in isolation, and the means of their application is obviously highly context-specific. The strategies are by their nature anticipatory, relying upon early warning to be effective. Efforts must therefore be made to establish trust with key local, national and regional actors, well before a crisis reaches the tipping point.

While there may be obstacles to cooperation, such as sovereignty sensitivities, these are not insurmountable. As was recognized in presidential statement S/PRST/2009/3, it is crucial that the expertise of such bodies as the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) be harnessed and supported by the United Nations.

The Department of Political Affairs is well placed to steer this initiative. Yet, it would benefit from having its capacities strengthened through the Council's commitment to Chapter VI of the Charter and preventive diplomacy strategies. The Security Council has the potential to be a fulcrum in the process of generating political will, securing pre-positioned funding, building capacities on the ground and promoting the use of the full range of preventive diplomacy tools. Accordingly, Nigeria believes that the time has now come for the United Nations to use its resources to act an ex ante as well as an ex post facto agent for peace. In unanimously passing resolution 1625 (2005), this body committed itself to a preventive approach to conflict management, as a complement to the peacekeeping activities more frequently in use today. We are now honour-bound to make the statements therein real, by putting the full weight of the Council behind the preventive diplomacy initiative contained in today's presidential statement.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Let me again acknowledge and welcome the presence of the Deputy Secretary-General, Her Excellency Ms. Asha-Rose Migoro, and invite her to take the floor.

The Deputy Secretary-General: Preventive diplomacy is an old art, but it faces new and evolving challenges. There is a pressing need to re-evaluate how we can use our limited resources and capabilities to maximize the impact of preventive action. I therefore thank the Nigerian presidency of the Security Council for its initiative in convening this debate. I would like to welcome in particular His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Nigeria. I thank you, Mr. Minister, for taking time out of your business schedule to be with us this morning for this important debate.

I am pleased to speak to the Council today on behalf of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The term "preventive diplomacy" was first coined by former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld. Since his time, the good offices of successive Secretaries-General have helped in the peaceful resolution of inter-State wars, civil conflicts, electoral disputes,

border disputes, questions of autonomy and independence and a range of other problems.

In today's fluid geopolitical landscape, we have new challenges to address. Preventive diplomacy must evolve to deal with increasingly complex civil wars, organized crime and drug trafficking and other transnational threats.

In recent years, we have witnessed the very welcome emergence of stronger policy frameworks in favour of conflict prevention, particularly in Africa, with a growing capacity for operational response. Preventive diplomacy today is being conducted by a broader array of actors than ever before, using a wide range of tools. This makes it possible to consider multifaceted preventive strategies of a kind that were previously not an option.

Over the past three years, we have sought to strengthen the Department of Political Affairs so that it would be capable of effectively carrying out its lead role in this area. In the past year alone, the United Nations has supported, often in partnership with others, more than 20 peace processes, and responded to many more disputes that did not reach that level.

We have improved our response capacity at Headquarters; we have regional diplomacy and peacemaking offices on the ground; we cooperate more effectively within the United Nations system and with regional and subregional organizations.

With the support of Member States, we are continuing to professionalize our mediation support capacity, which is seen as an increasingly valuable resource within the United Nations system and by our partners. We have also attempted to develop new tools, including the use of investigative mandates to help defuse tensions in judicial cases with political implications.

We are helping national authorities to build their capacity for dispute resolution, in addition to development programmes that can help address some of the structural causes of conflict. Most missions mandated by the Security Council today include an important mediatory role, typically carried out by the head of mission, in recognition of the fact that the need for diplomacy persists throughout the conflict cycle.

All of this holds promise for our preventive diplomacy in Africa. We see a need to focus, in particular, on four fronts.

First, we must continue to strengthen our partnerships. Successful peace processes require the contributions of a range of actors, at both the regional and the international levels. Our Dakar-based Office for West Africa has forged innovative working relations with the African Union and ECOWAS to address political crises throughout the subregion, a model that could be usefully replicated elsewhere. Other noteworthy developments include the increasing use of international contact groups and elders structures. Recent engagements in Guinea, Niger, the Comoros and Kenya have shown what we can achieve through partnerships that yield a combination of influence, impartiality, capacity and capability.

Secondly, we must be prepared to persuade. Effective preventive action depends critically on the will of the parties to the conflict. The better we understand motives, calculations and incentives to use violence, the better we can target our response. We must be willing to use all available leverage to persuade the key actors that it is in their own interest to accept diplomatic assistance to avert conflict. Neighbouring countries and subregional organizations that are closest to events on the ground and may have unique influence can be key allies here.

Thirdly, the international community should continue to invest in prevention. The global economic crisis has put new pressures on resources, and there is an overall trend towards doing more with less. Diplomatic approaches and responses, when successful, are highly cost-effective.

Fourthly, we must do more to support and encourage the role of women in prevention. Time and again, women in Africa and elsewhere have demonstrated a strong commitment to working to achieve sustainable peace. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) reaffirmed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. Yet women are still underrepresented in the formal stages of conflict prevention. We can and must do better.

According to recent studies, 15 years' worth of development aid to Africa has been effectively cancelled out by the cost of war on the continent. The case for preventive diplomacy is compelling on moral, political and financial grounds.

We have improved our ability to detect warning signs of impending crises, and we have at our disposal

a growing range of tools and instruments to address them. We must now set our sights on building our capacity for international preventive diplomacy, so that when called upon we can respond reliably and promptly.

The President: I thank the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Migiro, for her statement.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear a briefing by Ms. Sarah Cliffe, Special Representative and Director for the World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development of the World Bank. I now give the floor to Ms. Cliffe.

Ms. Cliffe: I am delighted and honoured to be here. I thank the Nigerian presidency for having asked us to participate in this meeting.

As many members of the Council will know, the World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development has been developed in very close cooperation with the United Nations. We have had the benefit of expert input papers from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme and other funds and programmes, and the benefits of an exchange just last month with the General Assembly on some of the preliminary conclusions of the Report.

I am particularly delighted that the subject of this debate is prevention, since this is likely to be one of the key messages of the World Development Report (WDR). Prevention is one of our central messages for two particular reasons.

First, countries that we consider to be post-conflict are experiencing more renewed insecurity that before, so the dividing line that we perhaps have between the idea of post-conflict and the idea of prevention situations is much less clear than we previously thought. That ranges from renewed civil war — by this decade over 90 per cent of new civil wars have occurred in countries that had already had civil wars — through fighting after political agreements. Up until the late 1990s, for example, peace settlements roughly did the job that we expect them to do, in that they prevented fighting after the settlement. Less than five per cent of global battle deaths in that period occurred in countries with peace settlements in place.

From the late 1990s onward, that picture changes quite a lot. Now, one third of battle deaths globally are taking place in countries that have political settlements or peace settlements in place, including some of the countries that the Honourable Minister referred to, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan.

Then there are high levels of crime and violence occurring after post-conflict settlements. For example, there is the situation in the Central American countries, where Guatemala or El Salvador achieved very successful peace settlements but now face rates of crime and violence that are causing more deaths than occurred during their civil wars. That issue has been of particular concern in Latin America. Of course this debate focuses on Africa, but I think we see some of the same trends starting to occur in other regions.

For all these reasons, prevention — even in situations where a successful post-conflict initial settlement has been achieved — is a very key challenge.

New research that we have conducted for the WDR indicates that the common element in those risks of recurring violence is weak national institutions, whether they be in the political, security or developmental areas.

Secondly, there is the challenge of preventing an escalation of violence in countries that have not previously had large-scale civil conflict. Here, the international donor community at present provides much less assistance to countries seeking to prevent violence than we do collectively to countries that have already had civil war.

If we look at West Africa, for example, we have committed large amounts of funds — again, collectively as donors — to Liberia, Sierra Leone or Côte d'Ivoire. But when we come to the transition arrangements that the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the United Nations have helped to facilitate in Guinea or Niger, we find that far fewer funds are available to help those Governments and those societies try to consolidate attempts to prevent escalation of conflict.

We term those transitions "preventative transitions". In one of our recent consultation meetings, President Johnson-Sirleaf — who is on the Advisory Council for the World Development report —

underlined that, as she put it, "You guys give everything to us after we have had a civil war, but nothing to us when we are trying to prevent a civil war." So that contrast will be one of the issues that we underline.

I thought I would conclude by raising some practical points or questions that are very much still in our minds as we go into the last third of this process that we have been conducting.

The first is the question raised as to whether we should provide more support for mediation. Certainly — as both the Deputy Secretary-General and the Minister raised — the cost of a civil war that actually breaks out is, as we know, enormous; it runs into the tens of billions of dollars, on average. Countries take, on average, 14 years to recover from civil wars to anything like their earlier stage. Mediation efforts tend to cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars — a much, much lower cost.

The second question is whether we should look at longer periods of facilitation after peace agreements. That was raised to us in our consultations. It is not within the area that the World Bank supports, but it was raised as a general point about the international architecture, that mediators tend to leave immediately after peace agreements are signed. In fact, countries face predictable risks for longer periods after that, often with very much less international facilitation. I think in that sense the peacebuilding architecture and the efforts made under the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund are also important.

The third question is whether we should look at more financial support for Governments working towards peaceful, preventative transitions. That is exactly the question of countries that are currently in the situation of Guinea or Niger, for example.

Fourth, is there an opportunity for a new partnership between the United Nations, the African Union and other regional organizations and the more developmental or economic institutions such as the international financial institutions? I think the question to ask ourselves here is whether there is more that we could do to try to provide the kind of economic development activities that can help stabilize countries entering a fragile, preventative transition.

I think there are also questions about whether there is potential to link up the more specialized, technical areas of the economic area agencies over issues such as natural resources management or wealth-sharing, which can be important issues in this kind of situation.

Lastly, I would like to underline — as the Minister and the Deputy Secretary-General also said — that prevention is not an issue only for individual nation-States. We have done quite a lot of new research on the way in which violence is clustering along insecure border areas and how violent movements are mobile in areas like Central Africa or the Sahel. It is very difficult for any single nation-State to take the actions, even with international support, that would be successful in truly resolving this sort of problem in the long term. Another question that we have here, as we finalize our own process, is whether we should be looking at more structural prevention at a multi-country or regional level, which includes supporting initiatives such as the African Union's border programme to bring stability and development instruments into those most fragile areas.

I will conclude here, and I thank you very much, Mr. President, for the opportunity to contribute to this debate.

The President: I thank Ms. Cliffe for her comprehensive briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council Members, I should like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): It is an honour for me to welcome you, Mr. President, to the Security Council today. Your presence testifies to Nigeria's commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security.

I thank Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro for her presence and her important remarks. And I am grateful to Sarah Cliffe for her very interesting presentation. I particularly appreciated the points that she has just made on the links between peace consolidation and development and how best to support efforts in that area.

The Security Council has on many occasions recognized the importance of the prevention of

conflicts, particularly in Africa. The focus of today's debate on optimizing preventive tools allows us to consider concrete and potentially innovative means to strengthen preventive diplomacy.

The Security Council bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, whereas the primary responsibility for preventing conflicts lies with Member States. Effectively articulating the dimensions of conflict prevention requires strategies that neither pre-empt the primary duty of Member States to prevent conflicts nor delay action by the Council. In order to achieve such a balance, constant dialogue between the Council and key stakeholders in potential conflicts is of utmost importance.

In this context, and as is widely recognized, the role of regional and subregional organizations in preventing conflicts cannot be overemphasized, particularly in Africa. By way of example, I wish to refer to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its early warning system, which relies on a network of actors, including civil society organizations, to collect and analyse data on potential conflicts and provide early warnings. Another major tool, the Council of the Wise, is engaged in important preventive diplomacy efforts. In addition, a Conflict Prevention Framework has guided ECOWAS actions to both avoid disputes turning into conflict and address the causes of conflict.

These institutional achievements are being translated in results on the ground. As has already been mentioned, that was the case in Niger, where ECOWAS was instrumental in preventing a serious political crisis in 2009 from degenerating into violence. That was also the case in Guinea and other countries. I should also like to mention the efforts of the three organizations, with the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, which play a very important role in Guinea-Bissau. Conflict-prevention activities and early warning mechanisms have also been important aspects of the work under way within the Southern African Development Community, the East African Community, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and Economic Commission for Africa.

At the regional level, the African Union has made conflict prevention a cornerstone of the African Peace and Security Architecture. Its Panel of the Wise is engaged not only in preventive diplomacy, including through fact-finding missions in areas of potential conflict, but also in examining some of the root causes of conflict, such as electoral crises and impunity. Considerable progress has been made in operationalizing the Continental Early Warning System.

These success stories show that enhancing United Nations support to the preventive capacity of African regional and subregional organizations is fully warranted. The Mediation Support Unit has made an important contribution to the work of the African Union Panel of the Wise. More should be done.

Improved communication between the regional and subregional bodies and the Security Council is also needed. In this regard, we were pleased by the recent consultations between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Another significant aspect to pursue in conflict prevention strategies and tools is the careful consideration of the usually manifold root causes of conflicts. Efforts to manage disputes and avoid their degeneration into conflict are necessary. However, they are insufficient if they do not effectively address the deep motives of the parties.

Coordination and coherence are also key elements of successful strategies for conflict prevention. In this context, it is fitting to mention the call made in the 2005 Outcome Document (General Assembly resolution 60/1) for the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to coordinate their activities, under their respective Charter mandates, so as to adopt an integrated approach to prevent conflicts.

The whole United Nations system should act together to effectively address the root causes of conflicts. In Africa, that means, for example, redoubling efforts to fully implement the New Partnership for Africa's Development and supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the prevalence of the rule of law. It also means supporting African Union efforts to address the issue of unconstitutional changes of Government in the continent.

Enhanced prevention activities by the Security Council require a strong capacity in the Secretariat to identify, assess and provide early warning on disputes. The Secretary-General should make full use of Article 99

of the Charter and of resolution 1625 (2005). Further recourse to fact-finding missions and confidence-building measures in the early stages of a dispute may also foster its peaceful settlement. At the same time, prudence and foresight are necessary to avoid involving the Security Council before its consideration of the issue is truly necessary and helpful.

Preventing the relapse of conflicts is also key. Peacebuilding, including its socio-economic component, and accountability are especially relevant to consolidate stability in post-conflict situations. The Peacebuilding Commission, an important institutional step in that direction, should be further strengthened. Truth and reconciliation commissions and transitional justice mechanisms also play an important role. In addition, the International Criminal Court has an important deterrent effect.

In conclusion, I wish to stress Brazil's continued commitment to the efforts of the Security Council to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of conflicts. As always, the Council can count on the support of my delegation.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I should like to welcome you, Mr. President, and to thank you for having organized and for presiding over this important debate. I also thank Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro and Special Representative Sarah Cliffe for their statements.

There is unanimity on the fact that it is better and cheaper to prevent and resolve conflicts. It is much more difficult and costly to keep the peace and deal with the consequences of the outbreak of conflict, especially when they degenerate into war or mass atrocities. My delegation is therefore convinced that optimizing the use of preventive diplomacy tools, including early warning, mediation and peacemaking, has immense benefits. Without durable peace and stability, sustainable development cannot be attained. Conflict prevention is thus a key component of peacebuilding.

The need to focus on more effective utilization of preventative diplomacy tools to avoid lapse or relapse into conflict is more urgent than ever before. The African Union (AU) and its subregional organizations have put in place mechanisms and structures for conflict prevention, mediation and resolution. These mechanisms have made some timely and useful interventions, and a lot more can be achieved. Operationalizing the AU Continental Early Warning System and its linkage with the subregional systems of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Southern African Development Community, the East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Economic Community of Central African States will provide comprehensive monitoring and analysis. That will facilitate decision-making on the most appropriate preventive or response actions at either the continental or subregional level.

Given the ongoing strengthening of the strategic partnership between the AU and the United Nations, the prospects for optimum use of preventive tools and capacities are greater. The African Union has shown its commitment to promoting and upholding constitutional order, democracy, good governance and rule of law for sustainable peace and development. It is enhancing its mediation and peacemaking efforts through mechanisms such as the panels of the wise and eminent persons. Former Presidents Mkapa, Buyoya, Obasanjo, Chissano and Mbeki, to mention a few, have played important roles in efforts to resolve conflicts in a number of countries.

The increasing cooperation among AU and United Nations mediators, as well as special envoys, is a welcome trend. It is important to emphasize that the primary responsibility for preventing conflict rests with national authorities and national actors. Consequently, initiatives by regional or international partners should be aimed at supporting national efforts in a well-coordinated manner.

In our view, there are three key challenges that must be addressed to ensure the optimal use of conflict prevention tools.

First, timely and robust preventive responses and actions are needed. In a number of cases, warning signals of impending violent conflict are given in good time, but often they are not matched with prompt action. That may be due to a number of factors, including political sensitivities, vested interests or lack of adequate capacity at national, subregional or regional levels.

Secondly, in spite of universal concurrence that conflict prevention is far less costly, there is a paradoxical reluctance to provide adequate and predictable resources for it. There is instead greater

willingness to allocate more resources for peacekeeping. It is time we invested more in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Thirdly, there is a need to focus more on addressing the root causes and drivers of conflict to ensure durable peace, stability and development. The key causes and drivers of conflict include proliferation of small arms, bad governance, human rights violations, marginalization, high unemployment levels, resource scarcity and, in some cases, poor management of abundant resources.

This debate provides yet another opportunity to focus on optimizing conflict prevention tools, particularly in Africa. The prospects are bright and challenges are surmountable. Let us sustain this momentum by actively prioritizing, supporting and investing in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to thank you, Mr. Minister, and Nigeria for taking the initiative of organizing today's open debate. I am grateful to Deputy Secretary-General Migiro and Ms. Sarah Cliffe for their respective briefings. I particularly welcome the priority the World Bank attaches to the issue of the nexus between security and development and, particularly, the very inclusive dialogue that the World Bank is conducting with stakeholders in the United Nations in preparation for the World Development Report.

In many parts of Africa conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding to prevent relapse into conflict is not a linear progression but rather a circuitous and often overlapping process. Even after a ceasefire agreement is reached, it has proven to be a challenge to escape the vicious cycle created by poverty and recurring conflict.

In order to meet the challenge, it is essential to implement an integrated approach encompassing security and development. We must also strengthen our efforts to build nations based on a comprehensive development agenda that includes poverty reduction and creation of employment opportunities, especially for the youth. The United Nations must engage actively in both preventive diplomacy and development assistance, particularly in Africa, as we are discussing.

The primary responsibility rests with Africans themselves for preventing conflict and maintaining peace and security in Africa. Many African countries have recently celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their independence. We have full confidence that African national leaders will continue their stride to promote democratic elections, security sector reform, good governance and the rule of law.

In parallel with national efforts, the African Union (AU) and subregional organizations have in recent years been increasingly proactive in conflict prevention and crisis management. Their active engagement in preventive diplomacy deserves high praise. For example, the AU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have taken a clear stance by issuing a statement that they do not tolerate unconstitutional changes of Government and that they expect a Government to accept international norms and standards for good governance and the rule of law. It was an important qualitative change in the preventive diplomacy efforts of the AU when its operating principle progressed from non-interference to non-indifference. That principled approach has produced positive results in many African countries.

Japan also welcomes the steady progress in developing the AU peace and security architecture, including the early warning system. Worthy of note in this connection is the African Peer Review Mechanism, the system that was created with a view to enhancing good governance.

What is the role of the United Nations international community? It is to encourage and support those African-led good offices activities through the United Nations, the World Bank and others institutions. The international community should strengthen, in particular, support for the capacity-building efforts of the AU and subregional organizations.

The Secretary-General's good offices and preventive diplomacy have frequently proved effective because they can be launched swiftly and flexibly at his initiative and within his authority under the Charter. To ensure that they have maximum effect, the United Nations should expand a reserve of experienced United Nations envoys and mediators who will act on behalf of the Secretary-General, who cannot be everywhere at once. The strength and advantage of the United Nations is its extended presence on the ground, through peacekeeping operations, integrated peacebuilding offices and regional political offices. The Secretary-

General and his representatives may make full use of those field offices for detecting any warning signs at an early stage and taking political initiatives to prevent escalation of tensions, crisis and conflict. For instance, the consolidated United Nations office to the African Union in Addis Ababa was established this month. We hope that this new setup will help to strengthen the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union.

In West Africa, where the countries in the region share the challenges posed by cross-cutting security issues such as drug trafficking and small arms, the United Nations Office for West Africa is playing an important role in facilitating collaboration among all relevant players and preventing and mediating conflicts in cooperation with ECOWAS. We believe that in the Central African region, a similar regional office will prove as useful in promoting regional security and preventing conflict, in the light of recent developments in the subregion. We should be mindful of resource implications, but we believe also that the costs can be largely offset by savings in peacekeeping operations in the region. The proposal by the Secretary-General has been pending since the beginning of the year. The Security Council should make its formal approval without further delay.

Another advantage is that the United Nations has the legitimate authority and capacity to mobilize all stakeholders in a timely manner. This impartial convening power should be useful not only in emergency and crisis but also in building confidence among concerned parties to defuse tensions. With such efforts, even if a conflict breaks out, the parties will be able to accept and engage in a continuation of dialogue, which might under normal circumstances be interpreted — or misinterpreted — as interference. Long-term engagement and perseverance are essential, because conflict resolution requires carefully nurturing trust and building confidence among key players.

What is the specific role of the Security Council? It is to provide effective support. The Council should encourage and support the efforts of the Secretary-General, the AU and subregional organizations, and, when appropriate, the Security Council should adopt a decision or issue a statement in support of the Secretary-General's efforts and urge the parties concerned to settle their dispute peacefully. When the Council expresses its position on a crisis in a timely manner, it puts pressure on the parties concerned and influences the international community.

The key question for the Council is how early it should engage in supporting the preventive diplomacy of the Secretary-General. In the light of the importance of drawing the attention of the Council to early warning signs, I suggest that we might request the Secretary-General to provide Council members with a regular political and security briefing, focusing on potential risks of conflict erupting or recurring. It might also be useful to organize an informal interactive meeting with concerned countries before a conflict breaks out.

Among other tools available, the Council tries to prevent the recurrence of conflicts when it deploys peacekeeping and political missions. But sanctions on those who hamper efforts at preventing conflict can also be an effective tool for conflict prevention and resolution. A mechanism to prevent illicit use of national resources, such as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for instance, would also be helpful.

To conclude, I would like to congratulate Nigeria on the adoption of today's presidential statement. In future, the Security Council should focus as much on preventive and anticipatory measures as it does on its reactive measures.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are thankful to you, Mr. Minister, and to your delegation for taking the initiative of holding a thematic debate on a subject that is of great importance on the international peace and security agenda. We are likewise grateful for the statements by Deputy Secretary-General Migiro and Ms. Cliffe, Special representative and Director for the World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development of the World Bank.

The high human cost and material losses caused by internal and international armed conflict oblige us to strengthen the link between peace, security and development, particularly as regards prevention. The international community should make use of all means at its disposal to prevent or limit the ravages of violence. To try to prevent the devastating consequences of armed conflict, especially for the civilian population, is a humanitarian, political and economic imperative. Traditionally, and perhaps unfortunately, the Organization has adopted a mainly

reactive role in crisis situations after they have broken out. We consider it of the highest priority to advance strategies that would help to strengthen capacities and improve the effectiveness of the United Nations in preventing conflicts through dialogue, consultation and peaceful settlement of disputes, in order to facilitate timely answers to emerging disputes and crises.

In this regard, we reaffirm the vital importance of implementing resolution 1625 (2005), one of the greatest advances in including the prevention of conflicts in the work of the Security Council, particularly in the context of crises and conflict situations in Africa.

In my delegation's view, it is important to improve the focus and effectiveness of the Organization and the Security Council in the prevention of conflicts, first, by promoting more effective partnerships among the various actors, particularly regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations and financial institutions; secondly, by improving information and early warning and preventive diplomacy mechanisms, particularly by promoting the application of the tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes set out in Chapter VI of the Charter, including regional and international mediation; and thirdly, by promoting measures aimed at tackling the structural causes of conflict, measures which include promotion of development, disarmament and strengthening the rule of law.

We support the establishment of strategic partnerships between the Security Council and subregional and regional organizations and the fostering of local capacities for conflict prevention and resolution. Strengthening this strategic relationship between the United Nations and the organizations that have been mentioned in Africa in the framework of the United Nations should be fuelled by greater technical cooperation in the sphere of conflict prevention and management, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, security sector reform, promotion and protection of human rights, strengthening of the rule of law and building the mechanisms necessary for early warning by linking national, regional and international networks to encourage the exchange of timely and objective information about potential crises and to anticipate situations before and during emergencies.

An illustration of the preventive work that we need in the Organization is the work that is being done by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide in his efforts to reach the international community and generate early warning mechanisms to prevent the irreversible deterioration of especially delicate situations internationally and especially on the African continent.

We recognize that a fundamental element in prevention is the promotion of observance of and respect for international law and the benefits and opportunities offered by Chapter VI of the Charter. On that basis, during its presidency of the Council in April 2009 and in June of this year, Mexico convened two thematic debates on mediation and peaceful settlement of disputes, and on the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security. Here, our aim was to seek to strengthen the Council's capacity to play a key role in promoting a major purpose of the Organization — the peaceful settlement of disputes — in keeping with the principles of justice and international law.

My delegation has reaffirmed that the Security Council has the twofold challenge of urging States to settle their disputes by peaceful means, and of providing all necessary support to strengthening and facilitating ongoing mediation exercises, including the preventive diplomacy efforts of the Secretary-General in his role as a mediator and by offering his good offices to parties to conflict, as well as through his special representatives and special envoys. It is also important to make use of the advisory functions of the International Court of Justice in the settlement of disputes.

Prevention also plays an important role in the post-conflict phase. Here, we encourage the Council to work with the Peacebuilding Commission in strengthening conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategies and to improve coherence and integration between peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding on the one hand and development on the other in order to ensure timely responses and to avoid the recurrence of conflict.

Finally, and just as important, my delegation views peace and justice as inseparable components of any effort to resolve any armed conflict. Therefore, giving precedence to one over the other only hampers action by the institutions that have been established to

guarantee those objectives. We also consider that combating impunity is often indispensable to avoid tension and the resurgence of violence of violence and confrontation. We are convinced that no lasting peace or true national reconciliation cannot be achieved unless those responsible for the most serious crimes are brought to justice, irrespective of their status, position or rank.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to begin by thanking Nigeria for its initiative to convene this open debate. I also welcome your presence, Foreign Minister Ajumogobia of Nigeria, to preside over today's meeting. My thanks go also to Deputy Secretary-General Migiro and to Ms. Cliffe of the World Bank for their presentations.

The peaceful settlement of disputes is a basic principle of the United Nations and a major responsibility of the Security Council. Preventive diplomacy is an important means for the settlement of disputes. The Charter of the United Nations offers philosophical guidance and a basis for action in diplomatic efforts to prevent crises and conflicts. For many years, the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and Member States have been engaged in preventive diplomacy in many forms and have made significant contributions to easing tensions, resolving hot-spot issues and restoring regional peace and stability.

In today's world, the nature of conflicts and disputes is undergoing profound change. Traditional conflicts between States are evolving towards a blend of inter- and intra-State conflict. Some regions in Africa have witnessed frequent conflicts; these remain a threat to the peace and stability of Africa and hamper the continent's development.

This new situation poses new challenges and requires that we move with the times, intensify our input and invigorate preventive diplomacy so as to make a greater contribution to international peace and security.

First, we must strengthen the concept of prevention and give priority attention to early prevention. Experience has repeatedly shown that remediation yields only limited results compared to prevention. If we cannot take rational and legitimate action in the early stages of a crisis and seek to settle disputes peacefully through mediation and other means, then we will have to spend several times more time and energy to remedy the situation once a crisis has erupted.

In recent years, United Nations peacekeeping operations have been overstretched, and the gap between supply and demand has widened. If we can do a good job at conflict prevention, we will be able not only to save resources and increase the efficiency of peacekeeping, but also to save people from the scourge of war. We must therefore strengthen the concept of prevention and put it into practice.

Secondly, we must adopt comprehensive strategies in the light of local conditions. The Security Council must study the root causes of disputes and conflicts of different natures and forms. It must come to objective and accurate judgements concerning disputes and offer appropriate proposals and procedures. Here, the Council must strengthen its coordination with other United Nations entities and work to resolve crises through good offices, mediation and other means.

For post-conflict countries, priority attention should continue to be focused on preventing the recurrence of conflict. Crisis management alone is not enough in conflict prevention; there must also be a commitment to helping the countries concerned to develop their economies, extricate themselves from poverty, achieve sustainable development and eradicate the economic and social root causes of conflict.

Thirdly, we must respect the views of the parties concerned and must give full scope to the comparative advantages offered by regional and subregional organizations. The key to the success of good offices, mediation and other means of preventive diplomacy is adequate political will among the parties concerned. The United Nations must enhance communication with the parties concerned, secure their cooperation and lay a solid foundation for preventive diplomacy.

Regional and subregional organizations have unique advantages in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. In recent years, the African Union (AU) and African subregional organizations have been actively engaged in mediation efforts addressing hot-spot issues in Africa, and they have achieved positive results. The Security Council should establish or deepen strategic partnerships with the AU and should fully motivate the AU and other regional and subregional organizations in the sphere of preventive diplomacy. It should encourage them to play their front-line role and should

create an enabling environment and conditions for them. At the same time, the Council should provide more assistance to them and should help them with capacity-building.

Fourthly, we must strengthen coordination and form synergies. The prevention and resolution of conflicts should follow a multi-pronged approach with political, security, economic and social dimensions. The Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission should enhance their exchanges and cooperation, complement one another's advantages, yielding synergy.

In recent years, the Secretary-General and his representatives have been actively engaged in resolving regional conflicts, and they have achieved fruitful results. In future, the Security Council should continue to support the Secretary-General in his active role.

China has always maintained that disputes should be settled peacefully, through dialogue and negotiation. We support a greater role for the United Nations and the AU and other regional organizations in preventive diplomacy.

I thank Nigeria for its preparation of today's presidential statement. China supported the Council's endorsement of that statement in order to demonstrate to the international community the Council's political will in its support for preventive diplomacy.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for having organized today's thematic debate on prevention of conflicts in Africa. As we know, Africa today hosts half of United Nations peacekeeping operations and nearly 75 per cent of Blue Helmets deployed: 73,645 out of 100,645, as of 30 June 2010.

In this context, the prevention of conflicts is a major issue. It has decisive advantages over traditional conflict management because it makes it possible to avoid human casualties, which include belligerent parties but civilians above all, as well as the series of population displacements and the economic devastation that often accompany conflicts. Moreover, in the context of the budgetary austerity that we are all experiencing, the cost of deploying peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations is increasingly difficult to manage.

Preventing conflicts begins with information. To obtain it, it is important that the Security Council can receive regular briefings, and as soon as it considers necessary, from the Secretariat on zones of fragility so as to be in a position to use as soon as possible and in a coordinated manner all of the tools available to it to prevent the exacerbation of a tense situation, tools such as mediation, good offices, condemnation and even sanctions.

These tools have proven their effectiveness in avoiding the outbreak of conflicts. Thus the mediation on the border dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon over the Bakassi peninsula, after the arbitration of the International Court of Justice and the Greentree Agreement, is now being implemented under the aegis of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, Mr. Said Djinnit. The role of coordination in the field of the regional offices of the United Nations that can be called upon by the Security Council to deal with situations should, in this respect, be strengthened.

Moreover, as previous speakers have said, African ownership of the prevention of conflicts and of the issues of peace and security in Africa is gaining ground. We can note, for example, the commitment of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Côte d'Ivoire in 2003 before the establishment of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the ECOWAS success in Togo in 2005; the many cases of mediation by the African Union, in particular for Madagascar and the Sudan, the firm positions taken by its Peace and Security Council against coups d'état, or recently in Guinea after the massacre of 28 September; and the actions by African peacekeeping forces, such as the African Union Mission in the Sudan before the transfer of authority to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and the African Union Mission in Somalia.

The international community's various targeted initiatives also contribute to preventing conflicts in Africa. France is particularly active today in combating illicit transfers of small arms and light weapons, which fuel the outbreak of crises in Africa and render them more dangerous. United Nations sanctions regimes, which can include arms embargoes, can also lead to reducing the number of weapons. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes also make it possible to reduce the number of combatants and weapons and are an essential tool in combating

trafficking, which nourishes conflict, by targeting arms trafficking.

Plans to reform the security sector aim to establish a security system that is effective and legitimate in the eyes of the population and controlled by civilian authorities. Under its foreign security policy, the European Union has led or supported at least three civilian operations dedicated to the reform of the security sector in Africa in recent years: in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic. Moreover, at the initiative of France, the European Union is providing active support to strengthening African peace and security capacities.

To combat the plundering of natural resources for the purposes of conflict, France has also supported — including within the General Assembly and this Council — the establishment of the Kimberley Process, which establishes a mechanism to certify the origin of diamonds, and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to ensure that the exploitation of this wealth contributes to the development of the countries concerned and does not serve to fuel wars underway by privatizing them for the benefit of armed groups, as we are seeing today, namely in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In a complementary way, development assistance also contributes to the stability of States.

Finally, the fact that the majority of African States have adhered to the Rome Statute also has a preventive effect by sending a signal that crimes will not go unpunished. The International Criminal Court is an essential element in conflict prevention.

France's White Paper on Foreign and European Policy for 2008 to 2020 places among its priorities the prevention of crises and conflicts. The White Paper on Defence and National Security, for its part, states that Africa will be at the forefront of our conflict prevention strategy for the next fifteen years, considering the direct or indirect repercussions that African conflicts can have on France and Europe, as well as the increase in traffic toward our continent.

As we can see, the prevention of conflicts in Africa is at the heart of international action. In parallel, an African system of collective security is now being established. Support for African initiatives remains essential because the continent does not have the material resources to face the demands of peacekeeping on its own. This support should have an essential place in the coordination and constancy of actions.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased to welcome you, Mr. Minister, as President of the Security Council. We are grateful to you for organizing this meeting on this theme of such importance to international peace and security.

In recent years, the United Nations, its Security Council and Secretary-General and many regional and subregional bodies have done significant work to identify the reasons for and to prevent conflicts. It is clear that efforts here must be focused, first and foremost, on overcoming the often long-standing political and socio-economic problems that are exacerbated by a wide range of new transborder threats and challenges. Among them are international terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime and the danger of the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. This list, of course, is far from exhaustive.

There are no quick formulas for resolving large-scale challenges in the area of preventing and resolving conflicts. There is a need for multidimensional and careful joint efforts to break the vicious cycle when insufficient development leads to social problems and when, against that backdrop, increasing political and military instability leads to the outbreak of a conflict. As a result, the effective realization of socio-economic development programmes becomes impossible. The complexity of those tasks requires working out a balanced strategy stemming from the interrelated nature of the problems of security, socio-economic development and human rights.

States themselves should be at the forefront of action. Of course, any assistance from the international community to prevent the outbreak of new hotspots of conflict should not be imposed. It is quite clear that the duplication of efforts, any kind of competition and, especially, hidden rivalry do not serve the common cause.

To a large extent, success in the early prevention of conflicts depends on the comprehensive use of early warning instruments and on taking into account the specific characteristics of individual conflict situations. We are convinced that investment, both material and intellectual, in the early prevention of conflicts and the

strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations in the area of peaceful mediation, political analysis and assessing conflict situations will pay off for the international community.

Today's conflicts cannot be resolved by force. The solution must be sought by involving all sides in dialogue and negotiation, and not by isolating any of them. The Russian Federation will consistently work to achieve a political diplomatic settlement to regional conflicts on the basis of collective actions by the international community.

Russia believes that it is extremely important to continue to actively use the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which encourage regional organizations to take more initiative in their preventive diplomacy actions and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The existence of strong regional organizations that can take on greater responsibility for the situation in their regions will allow the United Nations to deal in a more targeted manner with genuinely global issues in the interest of the entire international community.

Given the increasing demands of the effective and judicious distribution of work between the United Nations and regional organizations, the leading role of the Security Council remains essential, under the Charter, in questions of maintaining international peace and security. This has to do first of all with obligatory sanctions and control over regional and coalition peacekeeping operations, which provide for the use of force.

We note with satisfaction the noticeable growth in activities of African States, primarily of the African Union and regional and subregional organizations, in the prevention and settlement of conflict situations on the continent. This demonstrates the readiness and increasing ability of Africa to take responsibility for resolving its problems.

Russia itself participates in mediation activities and efforts to prevent conflicts and actively supports the relevant efforts by the United Nations and other international and regional organizations.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): Today's debate is a welcome opportunity to highlight again the importance of preventive diplomacy, and I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting this morning. I would also like to pay tribute to Nigeria's contribution to the work of the Security Council, including stewardship of the Council this month. I would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and Sarah Cliffe for their insights earlier in this debate.

I want to make three main points.

First, the United Kingdom believes that the international community needs to give greater attention to conflict prevention. Particularly in the Security Council, with its unique responsibilities, we have a duty to ensure that people do not suffer the devastation that comes with violent conflict when it could have been prevented.

Let us be clear: conflict prevention is an essential part of maintaining international peace and security. Indeed, arguably, it is the most important part.

Prevention is also cheaper than cure. But the balance of resources seems to have settled disproportionately in favour of peacekeeping rather than preventive diplomacy — that is, responding to conflict rather than preventing it. But powerful preventive diplomacy is not just a question of more resources. It is about making use of the full range of tools available to the United Nations across different stages of the conflict cycle. Recent experience in Kenya and the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has demonstrated that the rapid deployment of mediation teams can be crucial for effective conflict prevention. We have shown ourselves capable of deploying forces preventatively to halt an escalation of tension into armed conflict. A good example of this was the deployment of preventative force in Macedonia 1995.

Effective peacebuilding is, after all, a key means of preventing a relapse into conflict, and I thought that Sarah Cliffe's statistics on the relapse into civil war were very telling on this point. We need to be more confident that we are directing our resources to the places where they will have the greatest impact. This means that, however difficult it may be, we must have confidence that we can evaluate any efforts undertaken to prevent conflict.

Secondly, the Security Council, along with the rest of the United Nations system, needs to develop a genuine culture of prevention. In our view, this is largely, a question of political will. It will sometimes involve difficult decisions about fast-moving situations

in countries that are not currently on the Security Council's agenda. But if the Council is to meet its responsibilities for maintaining international peace and security, Council members must be prepared to take those difficult decisions.

As a practical step, we should minimize the obstacles to action by improving the information flow between United Nations bodies, between the Secretariat and the Security Council and between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

The Security Council should hear, as a matter of course, from the Secretary-General and his senior staff when they have visited regions where potential conflict is a concern. This is not to criticize their efforts to date. We, the member States of the Council, must be ready to draw on the Secretariat's early warning analysis and reporting on emerging conflicts.

Linked to that, the Secretary-General should offer regular advice to the Council on potential emerging conflicts — a sort of horizon-scanning exercise. We should encourage greater exchange of expertise and information across the United Nations system on potential precursors to conflict, and there needs to be a mechanism within the United Nations for drawing together the different strands of information and analysis. We therefore welcome the work under way to strengthen the United Nations early warning capacity.

We should also seek a stronger dialogue with regional and subregional organizations on ways to prevent conflict, including on issues that we know can drive conflict, such as the illicit extraction of natural resources.

Thirdly, the international community should continue to support and help develop the capacity of regional and subregional organizations. Timely African-Union-facilitated mediation in areas such as Madagascar, Kenya and Guinea played a vital role in preventing escalation of conflict. The United Kingdom welcomes the efforts by the United Nations and the African Union together to create a mediation support unit at the headquarters of the Economic Community of West African States. Through the African Peace Facility, the European Union has provided €300 million in the last three years to support African-led peacekeeping operations. There is still more that could be done in this area.

As the British Foreign Secretary, William Hague, recently said, we need a sharper focus on conflict prevention and to support the capacity of regional actors to take a leading role in promoting stability. We hope that the presidential statement adopted today will provide some measure of political support to those ongoing efforts.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, I would like to commend you, Mr. President, and the mission of Nigeria for organizing this debate to discuss this pertinent topic. We would also like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and Ms. Sarah Cliffe for their very informative briefings.

This issue is of particular importance for our increasingly globalized world, in which social and political crises have the potential to create an atmosphere of tension that can erupt into acts of violence or lead to instability for countries or regions.

In the past decade, peacekeeping has become the most important instrument of the United Nations in solving disputes and conflicts. Overstretched as it currently is, peacekeeping must encompass new initiatives and innovative methods for solutions helping to preserve or maintain peace. Those measures not only represent a peaceful alternative but are also less costly.

Addressing and solving contemporary conflicts requires an integrated approach with complementary tools such as mediation, negotiation, dialogue or conflict resolution and management. Bosnia and Herzegovina emphasizes the role of intercultural and interreligious dialogue in advancing regional cooperation and solving some of the difficulties. We are convinced that this is a necessary measure in order to build confidence and trust.

The links between security and development are mutually reinforcing. Therefore, conflict prevention should address the root causes of conflict in a comprehensive manner, including the promotion of sustainable development, good governance, rule of law, national reconciliation and poverty eradication.

Building preventive diplomacy capacity involves national, regional and, finally, United Nations expertise. The assessment of early warning information coming from the United Nations system should be timely in order to enable good policy options and decisive actions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina attaches great importance to enhanced cooperation between regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations. Strengthening cooperation and strategic partnership among the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union is of key importance for enabling early responses to disputes or emerging crises. Pursuing effective peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies should be based on flexibility and on making use of each partner's comparative advantages. This is relevant not only in terms of knowledge on the ground and exchanges of experience, but also for the training of military experts and the development of civilian expertise.

We welcome the progress made in recent years in the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme. We urge the United Nations to increase its engagement to make African Peace and Security Architecture fully operational as soon as possible, in particular in the areas of early warning, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and training. Furthermore, we consider it crucial for the African Union to ensure leadership and ownership of the process.

The United Nations and the Security Council, which have the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, should invest more effort in conflict prevention, through such means as fact-finding missions, mediation and confidence-building measures and the appointment of special representatives, who could provide useful recommendations for the peaceful settlement of disputes prior to preventive deployment or enforcement measures.

We are convinced that support for regional mediation initiatives, in close consultation with regional and subregional organizations, is an important element of ensuring peace and security, not only within countries but also between countries.

It is of vital importance that the Security Council be provided with regular reports and analyses on developments in regions of potential armed conflict in Africa, as well as on ongoing preventive diplomacy initiatives. Regional conflict management structures should provide the Security Council with timely and rapid information to facilitate adequate and proper decision-making.

We must not exclude or underestimate negative developments in the economic, social and security sectors. Special attention should be given to monitoring tensions arising from economic and social issues and actions against the illegal exploitation of natural resources and high-value commodities.

Particular emphasis should be placed on programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, as an integral element of peacebuilding activities. Strengthening the role and capacities of civil society groups and women and their involvement in post-conflict peacebuilding activities are necessary for the promotion of a culture of peace and economic empowerment.

In conclusion, cooperation should be strengthened in the deployment of peacekeepers and to more closely involve regional and subregional organizations in peacebuilding, post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction processes through the framework of the Peacebuilding Commission. Linking United Nations expertise and experts from regional organizations will significantly contribute to increasing the pool of available expertise.

Multilateral endeavours and actions should be focused on conflict resolution in a more transparent and open way. Short-term solutions should only pave the way for long-term approaches that require proper understanding of the root causes of conflict, which often lie in political grievances, underdevelopment, backwardness, lack of good governance or concerns related to the preservation of ethnic, cultural, national and religious identities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that enhancement of consultations between the Secretariat and its counterparts at the regional and subregional levels will enhance complementarity and minimize duplication of efforts. Strengthening the input of regional organizations in decision-making and the peaceful settlement of disputes is crucial. At the same time, regional organizations can act as bridges when the ownership of peace processes is transferred from international to domestic authorities.

Ms. Anderson (United States of America): The United States thanks Nigeria for organizing this meeting and welcomes Minister Odein Ajumogobia to the Council today. I would also like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and Ms. Sarah Cliffe for their remarks.

Conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes are among the founding purposes of the United Nations and the pillars of its Charter. They are an important focus for our work here in the Council.

In our interconnected age, conflicts that start in fragile States can drag entire regions into violence, and such conflicts can turn already fragile States into incubators of transnational threats, including terrorism and trafficking in arms or drugs. Development and security are inextricably linked, and to stave off conflicts and bolster fragile States we must work with partners, including the United Nations, regional and subregional groups, development banks, donors and non-governmental organizations. In short, we must sharpen and strengthen our instruments to prevent conflict and settle disputes.

We must also tackle the underlying factors that fuel all too many conflicts: discrimination, corruption, lack of accountability, poverty, economic disparities and threats to the rule of law.

With this in mind, I would like to make five points today.

First, we need to continue to improve early warning capabilities and ensure that they inform and drive preventive action to prevent conflicts and save lives. This means enhancing both intelligence gathering and analysis, including monitoring trends, spotting triggers or accelerators of conflict and understanding local contexts and cultures.

We are getting better at gathering this information, but there remain significant gaps between on-the-ground reporting, political analysis and decision-making. To close these gaps, we need to link the best available information to the best possible analysis. This will require having the right United Nations country team on the ground, with the right training and the right resources. It will also require better real-time communication and stronger coordination among reporting entities and political analysts so that decision-makers have a range of creative and credible options from which to choose. Lives could also be saved through closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional early warning systems, such as the one being developed by the African Union.

Secondly, multilateral mechanisms must be better equipped to respond effectively to potential and emerging crises. Among the most effective ways to prevent violence and halt escalation are international mediation and preventive diplomacy, backed by a readiness to use other tools. The United States is working to advance multilateral diplomatic initiatives to reinforce the foundations of peace, security, human rights and development.

For its part, the United Nations has produced useful innovations, such as the Department of Political Affairs Mediation Support Unit, and its standby panel of mediation experts. But these teams are not used enough, and they lack sufficient resources. They also need the full support of local and regional actors, as we saw in the effective international response to the violence after Kenya's 2008 elections.

Secretary-General Ban and his predecessors have used their good offices to help end many conflicts over the past 20 years. But regional and subregional organizations have important roles to play as well. The African Union and the Economic Community of West African States have helpful mediation capacities, and we encourage them to do more to resolve conflict. We also encourage such regional groups to deepen their cooperation with the United Nations.

Thirdly, the recent creation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) remind us all of the struggles that women face in times of armed conflict, including rape and sexual violence. We must include women in peace processes and give them significant decision-making roles in conflict resolution. Mediation efforts that exclude women's perspectives are likely to neglect issues vital to securing a lasting peace.

Fourthly, enhancing multilateral capacities to stave off conflict also means strengthening the international community's ability to support peace in fragile States or ones where newly reached peace agreements have yet to take hold. The most accurate means of predicting future armed conflict is looking at places where armed conflict has recently ceased. United Nations peacekeepers have proved that they can help prevent further violence in the wake of bloody conflicts, but only if they have adequate resources, proper training and clear mandates. Civil society has an essential role in building the institutions that make a society resilient at times of crisis including

communities, churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, schools, a vigorous free media, human rights groups and other strong organizations.

But in some situations, atrocities will unfold so quickly or massively that they can be quelled only by the swift arrival of people to keep the peace. In such cases, the United Nations must continue to work with local Governments and regional organizations, including the African Union, the European Union and NATO, to ensure that it has both the political will and the logistical capacity to deploy quickly.

Finally, let me say a few words about peacebuilding. The past decade has witnessed important innovations here, including the creation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, but we still have much to do. We need more flexible development funds that arrive sooner, early investments in the core capacities of the struggling State and international support for national efforts to reinforce the rule of law, to demobilize ex-combatants and to reform State security services. We also need to provide lasting support to the victims of sexual violence and the victims of other human rights abuses.

Just because an armed conflict stops does not mean it will not start again, and the international community must continue to enhance the tools at its disposal to prevent the recurrence of armed conflict and cement durable peace and lasting reconciliation.

We share a common responsibility to do everything in our power to develop the mediation tools, the warning mechanisms, the multilateral institutions, the effective peacekeeping forces and the strong communities to prevent conflict and avoid the shedding of the blood of the innocent.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): I should like to welcome you, Sir, and to thank you for presiding over the Council today. I should also like to thank the Nigerian presidency for its leadership in preparing the presidential statement we have just adopted. I should also like to thank Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro and the World Bank Special Representative, Ms. Cliffe, for their presentations.

I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting. As members will recall, at the Istanbul retreat, where Council members discussed the issues of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, the complementary nature of preventive diplomacy in the overall peacemaking process was underlined, and it was suggested that the Council take up this issue in the future. Today's meeting fits into that understanding.

Preventive diplomacy, in the sense of using proactive measures to prevent political conflicts from erupting into violence and to promote peaceful dispute resolution is, indeed, a crucial part of the peacemaking process. We all agree that international security is better served by working to prevent the outbreak of crises rather than by simply reacting to them once they have occurred. Adopting a policy of doing nothing in the face of deadly conflict simply defers the problem to a later date, when the level of destructiveness and the costs of intervening are much higher and the risks of action even greater.

There is broad consensus that the usefulness of preventive action depends critically on the sense of legitimacy they elicit, not just from domestic constituencies, but also from the larger international community. Undertaking such actions without due regard for their legitimacy can prove counterproductive, in particular where these actions conflict with established norms of State sovereignty. Poorly justified actions from outside may provoke resentment and further escalate conflict.

In fact, conflict prevention is one of the chief obligations set forth in the Charter of the United Nations; primary responsibility for it belongs to national Governments. Yet, no State or organization can act alone. Sovereign Governments must be able to rely on the support of external actors, whose activities can be crucial in helping to prevent conflict. National sovereignty is strengthened by early action to prevent armed conflict because such action rules out the need for unwelcome external interference later on. That having been said, it is also a fact that third parties cannot remove the underlying causes and perceptions of conflict. They can undertake and encourage measures to set relations between the parties to a conflict on a new course.

Best practices for conflict prevention rely on well developed systems of early warning, explicitly provide for resource pooling and burden sharing among a range of diverse actors, and apply diplomatic as well as military leverage appropriate to the problem at hand. No single agent is likely to be equal to the complex task of helping others with their conflicts.

Interventions and pressures are more effective when employed collectively, and are most effective when issued by an institutionalized group of which the parties to the conflict are members, such as an international or regional organization. Beyond unilateral action, non-governmental organization assistance, State coalitions, regional and subregional organizations and, finally, the United Nations comprise the other layers.

As the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has a responsibility to promote and support mediation as an important means for the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is the only institutionalized collectivity available, yet it is strained.

Here, it becomes clear how important the coherence of mediation processes conducted by or under the auspices of the United Nations is, through the improved coordination of efforts with other actors, including regional and subregional organizations. Engaging the potential and existing capacities and capabilities of such organizations in mediation efforts will help ease the burden on the United Nations.

As a matter of fact, regional organizations have an important role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, as well as relevant resolutions. We are encouraged to see the Council's resolve to strengthen United Nations support to such prevention and mediation efforts through improved coordination and cooperation, in particular in Africa.

We welcome the promotion of the deepening and broadening of dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. Moreover, we believe that there is definitely a need for closer and more operational cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in Africa, such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Southern African Development Community, to build national and regional capacities in relation to the preventive diplomacy tools of mediation, information gathering and analysis, early warning, prevention and peacemaking, with a view to responding more promptly to the emerging threats to security in their areas.

In this context, I should like to make reference to the importance of the role played by the regional United Nations offices, such as the United Nations Office for West Africa, and the valuable contribution of mediation capacities such as the Council of Elders, the Panel of the Wise, the good offices of the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General's special envoys.

If we are to enhance the impact of our efforts and address the root causes of conflict, the thrust of preventive work must shift from reactive, external interventions with limited impact to internally driven initiatives for developing local and national capacities for prevention. This approach fosters home-grown, self-sustaining infrastructures for peace that promote ownership.

We believe that the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and development in general are the indispensable foundations for prevention. Many of the Millennium Development Goals, if attained, would serve to significantly reduce the overall sources of tension for developing countries that are vulnerable to conflict. Women have an important role to play in the settlement of disputes. Their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security is particularly important.

Addressing the primary sources of tension in conflict-vulnerable regions and countries is key to preventing armed conflicts. Conflict situations require monitoring to coordinate action since, whether early or late, opportunities are often brief; but attention must be sustained.

The establishment of the Department of Political Affairs Mediation Support Unit, which provides expertise to support the mediation efforts of the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, is a welcome development in that sense. Yet, it is not sufficient. If prevention is central to United Nations efforts, system-wide strategic leadership in this area should be strengthened. The Department of Political Affairs, which is the centre for direct support for preventive diplomacy and good offices, should be better equipped in the light of its growing workload. The Security Council must also undertake more missions to areas of potential or actual conflict.

Meeting humanitarian needs in a timely way can also contribute to preventing the outbreak or recurrence of armed conflict. A great deal more can and should be done on the humanitarian front to avert crises before they lead to armed confrontation. In particular, tackling climate change, food insecurity and related problems of agricultural underproduction and resource scarcity can do much to stabilize a fragile situation.

In that sense, development of a more structured relationship between the United Nations system and the international financial institutions to ensure better coordination in the policy planning process and to create greater synergies and stronger joint leverage could be encouraged. Similarly, effective coordination between and within United Nations organs, programmes, funds and agencies involved in policy formulation and implementation is vital to ensure greater coherence in existing mechanisms and appropriate balance between peacekeeping operations and preventive activities.

The financial resource question should be examined in comparison to the costs of handling the problem later, when it is worse, more costly, more difficult to handle and more disruptive to our own concerns. "Future opportunity cost" is a concept that needs to be taken into account.

In order to build the foundations for sustainable peace, recovery requirements should be taken into consideration during the mediation process. This highlights the crucial role that the Peacebuilding Commission has to play in promoting mediation.

Every conflict prevented or managed contributes to building precedents and principles for dealing with future cases. Early intervention and prevention are always the better approach. Most important, missed early opportunities should not be taken as cause for despair or unripe later situations as an excuse for inaction.

Ms. Ziade (Lebanon): Allow me to start by thanking you, Sir, for honouring us with your presence today. My delegation would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and Ms. Cliffe for their comprehensive briefings. My delegation commends the initiative of the delegation of Nigeria to convene this open debate. This theme is, indeed, a topic of the utmost importance to my delegation.

The United Nations Charter has entrusted the Security Council with the primary responsibility to maintain peace and security in the world. And it was only five years ago that world leaders adopted the 2005 World Summit outcome document in which they reiterated the obligation of States to settle their disputes by peaceful means in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter. They also stressed the importance of the prevention of armed conflict, the need to have a coherent and integrated United Nations approach to prevent such conflicts and the role of the good offices of the Secretary-General to that end.

Where do we stand today with respect to all these noble objectives and how are we to optimize the use of preventive diplomacy tools to achieve them? In this context, my delegation would like to focus on three areas. The first is the United Nations and preventive diplomacy. The complexity of today's world requires an integrated and comprehensive strategy based on a multifaceted approach by the United Nations to detect, intercept and prevent any source of tension, to resolve conflict and to ensure the consolidation of peace.

My delegation welcomes the four fronts to which the Deputy Secretary-General eloquently referred in her presentation, which demonstrate the attempts by the United Nations to move from reaction to action. My delegation considers the creation of the Mediation Support Unit and Mediation Support Standby Team within the Department of Political Affairs as a positive step in the right direction. Those two components have enhanced preventive diplomacy capabilities at Headquarters and in the field. At the same time, while we should recognize the good offices efforts of the Secretary-General and his envoys, additional resources are needed to expand those efforts. Financial resources are an essential prerequisite without which an effective approach, common objectives and enhanced predictable support capacities will remain a theoretical paradigm.

Secondly, on the active role of national Governments in cooperation with the United Nations, indeed the primary responsibility for conflict prevention rests with national Governments and other local actors. National Governments will be able, through dialogue with civil society, women's organizations, youth groups and other national actors, to identify sources of tension and address root causes of conflicts. Afterwards, those Governments should be able to assess their needs and priorities and create road

maps to achieve them. If, as Ms. Cliffe stated, 90 per cent of civil wars recur in countries which have suffered from civil war, the role of the United Nations will become more crucial to support and assist Governments in their efforts to prevent the recurrence of violence through providing expertise and know-how and sharing lessons learned and success stories.

In this context, special attention should be paid to adopting an integrated approach linking security, justice and development. This integrated approach will draw from the spectrum of expertise and vast experience of the Security Council, the Department of Political Affairs, the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF and other specialized agencies. This integrated approach will be more effective if it includes regional and subregional organizations.

That leads me to my third point: how to enhance coordination and cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. The African Union and its Peace and Security Council and the Economic Community of West African States have emerged as important players in addressing conflicts in Africa and have thus made invaluable contributions to maintaining peace and security. They are already working to implement effective conflict prevention techniques, in particular through the African Union Border Programme. The United Nations, in particular the Security Council, should continue to strengthen cooperation with these organizations to effectively utilize their regional early warning mechanisms, peacekeeping efforts and peacebuilding capacities.

This cooperation is particularly important as most armed conflicts in Africa result from a multitude of causes, which are, inter alia, poverty, corruption, drugs, misuse of natural resources and the illicit arms trade. The United Nations can provide assistance when these organizations are trying to address in a comprehensive manner the root causes of these armed conflicts. United Nations bodies should provide their expertise and resources in finding solutions and contributing towards the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In this context, it is worth noting that the informal interactive meeting which was held last week between the representatives of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Security Council strengthened the path of cooperation that, it is hoped, will be transformed into partnership. It is only through that partnership that both councils can face the challenges in Africa in general, and in Darfur and Somalia in particular.

It is our collective duty to prevent conflict and the loss of innocent life whenever and wherever we can. Successful mediation and settlement of disputes, including, inter alia, provision of financial resources and human expertise, is one of the greatest assets we have in combating violence. Such assets, combined with our concerted efforts and goodwill, help us not only to maintain international peace and security but also to implement policies that will prevent human loss.

We congratulate Nigeria on the adoption of today's presidential statement.

Mr. Issoze-Ngondet (Gabon) *(spoke in French)*: Allow me first of all, Sir, to say how delighted I am that you are presiding today, on behalf of your country Nigeria, over this important debate on the prevention of conflict.

The complexity and cost of current conflicts, especially in Africa, have substantially weakened the chances for stability and development on the continent. This situation in itself justifies the Council's desire increasingly to emphasize prevention. For several decades Gabon has been firmly committed to conflict prevention, especially in Central Africa. That commitment was recently reaffirmed by our President, His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, in his statement of 9 March 2010 at the International Peace Institute in New York, coinciding with the Gabonese presidency of the Council.

We are convinced of the benefits of establishing a true culture of prevention at the United Nations, and we have consistently encouraged the Council to adopt an operational strategy for conflict prevention. As the debate has been framed, the question of conflict prevention is a vast question comprising several aspects. My statement will address only two of these, undertaking first an updated evaluation of the work of the Council on the basis of the Secretary-General's 2008 report on conflict prevention (S/2008/18), and then suggesting some approaches to transforming the challenges of preventive diplomacy in Africa into opportunities for partnership with the United Nations.

The 2008 report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1625

(2005) confirms, inter alia, the Council's commitment to follow a preventive approach. Indeed, since the adoption of that resolution the Council has affirmed its role in conflict prevention activities. Resolution 1778 (2007), authorizing deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), already responded to the need for preventive approach, in that the aim was to prevent conflict spilling over from Darfur into Chad and the Central African Republic. Since then the Security Council has opted for a disciplinary approach in preventing conflicts.

The mandates of the peacekeeping missions adopted by the Council in 2010 provide appropriate frameworks for mechanisms to prevent the recurrence of conflict. The mandates of MINURCAT, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, set out respectively in resolutions 1923 (2010), 1924 (2010) and 1925 (2010), are inspired essentially by the disciplinary approach proposed in the 2008 report of the Secretary-General. In these cases this comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach is based on cooperation with the Governments of Chad, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire, as well as numerous other Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) as well as civil society actors.

These advances should be highlighted and welcomed. By taking this approach, the new mandates take into account the root causes of conflict and provide for operational activities and systemic prevention. By working to eliminate poverty and by working for lasting development, security sector reform, the rule of law, respect for and protection of human rights and greater involvement of women in national reconciliation processes, United Nations missions today are working more effectively towards the complete eradication of the causes of conflict and towards their geographical containment to prevent them from spilling over into neighbouring countries. My delegation is convinced, however, that the development of a broad, visible, realistic conflict prevention strategy based, inter alia, on an early warning mechanism covering especially the potential conflict zones and on a true culture of prevention shared by all Member States would make United Nations action more effective.

Turning to Africa, the challenges should be viewed rather as opportunities to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union or the continent's subregional organizations. Convinced that the United Nations cannot succeed in Africa on its own, the African Union and subregional organizations such as ECOWAS and ECCAS, to mention only two, have succeeded in setting up their own conflict prevention mechanisms. But it is clear that for them to fully carry out their role and to become operational these mechanisms should be enjoy substantial supported from the United Nations. From that perspective it is important to ensure more efficient implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union, adopted jointly by the United Nations and the AU in November 2006. A closer partnership with the African Union has two main purposes: first, to facilitate rapid reaction in the event of crisis, as was done in Guinea and in Niger, and secondly, to enhance the African Union's capacity to find solutions to crises and conflicts, as is the case in Darfur, particularly through the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and to a lesser extent in Somalia with the African Union Mission in Somalia.

The operationalization of the African Union Peace and Security Architecture is the challenge that most urgently calls for cooperation from the United Nations. The various mechanisms that make up the Architecture, namely, the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise, the African Standby Force and the African post-conflict reconstruction and development policy framework are meant to play a crucial role in conflict prevention. That role would naturally lead to a significant reduction in the number of United Nations interventions in Africa and accordingly a reduction in the cost of United Nations operations.

At the subregional level, cooperation with the United Nations requires a greater and more visible presence on the ground. Rather than calling for a strengthening of its peacekeeping missions in Africa, we would aim at encouraging the United Nations to be more present through the action of its regional offices. The excellent work done by the United Nations Office for West Africa, very often in cooperation with the

African Union and ECOWAS, demonstrates the capacity of the United Nations to excel in prevention. Central Africa is particularly affected by cross-border tensions, and the countries of that subregion have been endeavouring to establish a conflict prevention architecture organized, essentially, around the Central African rapid response mechanism and the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa. Those two mechanisms need United Nations support to be fully operational.

My country has always favoured the establishment of a new regional preventive mechanism, similar to the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), whose experience and success have been clearly acknowledged by the Security Council. Through good offices, mediation, information sharing with subregional mechanisms — as UNOWA does in West Africa — this office would support the States of Central Africa with a view to making the subregion another zone of lasting peace, security and stability.

More than ever before, the Security Council must strengthen its preventive action and capacities. In terms of advantages and costs, there are innumerable benefits in such an approach. My delegation is convinced that strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union would encourage such a trend. The future of Africa — which, like all other continents, increasingly aspires to greater peace, stability and development — depends on the commitment of those two organizations to work together to eradicate the causes of conflict that weaken us.

I hope that the outcome of this debate will lead the United Nations to deepen its commitment along these lines. It is with that in mind that my country supported the presidential statement endorsed today.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for honouring us by presiding over this important debate today and also to thank you and the Nigerian presidency of the Security Council for having organized this important meeting. We were grateful for the statement by Deputy Secretary-General Asha Rose Migiro and for the interesting presentation by Ms. Cliffe.

Austria associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the European Union delegation later in the course of this meeting.

In today's world, we are confronted by a large number of crises and new global challenges that can potentially develop into fully fledged conflicts and that can pose a threat to international peace and security. The peaceful settlement of conflicts should be the first instrument that we always try to resort to. It is indisputable that, in terms of cost effectiveness, conflict prevention and resolution benefit from a substantial comparative advantage over other forms of engagement, such as large-scale conflict intervention and post-conflict reconstruction.

Preventing the escalation of disputes into armed conflict or relapse into armed conflict needs to go hand in hand with other crisis management activities, such as mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. All those activities must ensure respect for the rule of law and human rights, as well as the need to fight impunity and address the root causes of conflict.

The settlement of conflicts by peaceful means remains one of the biggest challenges the African continent is facing today. Instability in Africa also has global implications which require the continued attention, action and commitment of the Security Council, as well as of all other relevant actors.

Austria fully supports efforts aimed at intensifying cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union (AU) and its regional economic commissions, the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community. African involvement and experience in conflict prevention and resolution, early warning and mediation are vital. It is also an issue of ownership, and existing African capacities should be used and further developed in line with the AU-United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme. These enhanced capacities will in turn also foster the implementation of Security Council resolutions with regard to the protection of civilians, women and peace and security and children in armed conflict.

The development of a strategic partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is therefore of particular importance to the maintenance of international peace and security. We further believe that all options for funding conflict prevention efforts should be thoroughly considered.

In that context, we believe that there is also a need to further strengthen and efficiently use the capacities of the United Nations Secretariat or other actors, such as the European Union (EU). The European Union cooperates closely with the African Union in the framework of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, including through regular high-level consultations in the framework of the EU Political and Security Committee and the AU Peace and Security Council, and in the field of human rights through the AU-EU human rights dialogue. The AU-EU road map of the peace and security partnership, as agreed in October 2009, further underlines the commitment of both organizations to deepen their cooperation. In doing so, it is important to bear in mind a clear division of labour, as well as the comparative advantages that each organization may have.

Austria is convinced that the good offices of the Secretary-General and his special envoys make a significant contribution to the prevention of armed conflict and to mediation in Africa. In particular, we wish, as others have already done today, to commend the valuable contribution of the United Nations Office for West Africa in successfully preventing conflicts, as was seen in the recent cases of Guinea and Niger. In addition, I wish to highlight the important role of integrated peacebuilding offices in addressing the root causes of conflict and enhancing resilience by supporting security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, as well as activities aimed at strengthening the rule of law and human rights. We believe that the Security Council could examine the merit of expanding the network of such offices.

Moreover, the potential of the various United Nations field presences in Africa in the area of conflict prevention and early warning should be fully utilized to improve and sustain the ability of the United Nations in cooperation with regional partners and national Governments to respond to emerging conflict situations in a timely and decisive manner. In addition, we would also like to stress the crucial role that the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide has in matters relating to the prevention and resolution of conflict.

Effective efforts to prevent armed conflict also represent a tool to address cross-border and transnational threats to stability, such as drug and human trafficking, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and transborder organized crime. Austria believes that prevention measures should also be aimed at addressing those threats. We support numerous projects that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna is undertaking in this regard and wish to commend the Office for its valuable contribution to conflict prevention.

Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) urge Member States and the Secretary-General to ensure the increased representation of women in all aspects of conflict resolution and peace processes. We hope to see an increase in the participation, representation and full involvement of women also in preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts in the future.

In conclusion, Austria would like to express its thanks to Nigeria for promoting the issue of conflict prevention and resolution in the Security Council and congratulates it on the presidential statement that was adopted today. We look forward to continuing our discussions on this very important matter.

The President: On behalf of the Security Council, I wish to warmly welcome the participation of Her Excellency Ms. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, and I have pleasure in inviting her to take the floor.

Ms. Nkoana-Mashabane (South Africa): South Africa would like to thank you, Mr. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, for inviting us to this very important debate on the maintenance of peace and security and optimizing the use of preventive diplomacy. The topic you have chosen relates directly to the decision of the African Union (AU) Assembly to proclaim 2010 as the Year of Peace and Security in Africa. We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the participation of the Deputy Secretary-General and the representative of the World Bank in this debate.

We have long recognized the importance of preventive diplomacy as a critical tool to avert the outbreak of conflicts. The escalation of peacekeeping costs over the years, both in material terms and in terms of human life, has also made it necessary for the international community to focus more on conflict prevention, both regionally and globally.

The African continent has borne the brunt of violent conflict over the decades. It is for this reason that, since its inception in 2002, the African Union has worked tirelessly to establish a comprehensive Peace and Security Architecture which is founded on a paradigm that recognizes both preventive diplomacy and post-conflict reconstruction and development as key to eradicating conflict on our continent.

The mechanisms that the African Union has since put in place in this regard bear testimony to the commitment of our continent in addressing peace and security challenges in a comprehensive manner. In our subregion, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) continues to play a critical role in ensuring subregional stability. In that context, the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security has undertaken mediation efforts in quelling potential conflicts. SADC has also launched the SADC Brigade, consisting of military, police and civilian components from all SADC member States, which will form part of the African Union Standby Force for rapid deployment should the need arise.

All of these efforts are anchored in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly Article 33, which provides for mediation as one of the diplomatic methods for the pacific settlement of disputes. With the changed nature of conflicts from inter-State to intra-State, preventive diplomacy has become an indispensable tool used by both the United Nations and regional organizations.

Efforts to bring about the consolidation of peace and stability have been and remain a complex matter that requires political will and commitment from all parties involved, including support mechanisms. In the past few years, we have witnessed a reduction in the number of violent conflicts as a result of the collective efforts of the United Nations, the international community and regional organizations. African Member States, through their subregional formations, have taken responsibility, while at the same time recognizing that the peaceful resolution of conflicts remains a sovereign responsibility.

Also, the Secretary-General's good offices continue to play an important role in mediation efforts. One very important option in this regard is the strengthening of the Mediation Support Unit and the early warning capacity within the Department of Political Affairs, which will help better provide coordination, communication, support and guidance. With this in mind, the African Union has always striven to deepen its partnership with the United Nations on matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. Our efforts towards a strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the maintenance of peace and security on our continent is informed by the reality that regional organizations have a comparative advantage in confronting such challenges within their regions.

This comparative advantage is increasingly allowing the AU to respond proactively and in a rapid manner, limiting the escalation of conflict and human suffering. This is evident in the recent interventions by the African Union in the Sudan and Somalia, as well as in its mediation efforts and peace support operations, thus clearly demonstrating its political will and its commitment to confronting peace and security challenges.

Dialogue is important to South Africa, and we therefore hold the view that in preventing lapses and relapses back into conflict, the importance of creating and maintaining peace through inclusive dialogue, reconciliation and reintegration must always be underscored. Finding a global strategy for preventive diplomacy, including the traditional means of mediation, as well as peacekeeping and peacebuilding methods deployed under the United Nations Charter, is essential in this regard.

We firmly believe that, at the heart of preventive diplomacy, socio-economic development is important for the realization of sustainable peace and can indeed create economic opportunities in countries affected by conflict. The success of preventive diplomacy depends not only on an effective early warning mechanism, but also on the involvement of non-State actors. For instance, community-based organizations have demonstrated time and again that they can be a partner with Governments and the international community in providing early warning support and acting proactively and decisively to prevent a potential conflict situation.

Preventive diplomacy is one good example of the international community working together for lasting peace and sustainable development. We therefore heartily support you, Mr. President, in this noble initiative.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): I have the honour to address the Security Council today on behalf of the African Group and to start by expressing the Group's appreciation to the Nigerian presidency and to you personally, Mr. Minister, for organizing this important debate focusing on the issue of optimizing the use of preventive diplomacy tools, which is of significant importance to the African continent. I would also like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her valuable introductory remarks and to welcome the participation of the World Bank in this valuable discussion.

Today's debate constitutes an integral part of the broader discussion on the most effective ways to address threats to international peace and security, as well as to enhance the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in that regard. Despite the fact that several conflicts have plagued different parts of Africa over the past decades, the leaders of the African continent have always been aware of the importance and benefits of adopting conflict prevention approaches. Preventive measures that were designed to address some of the root causes of conflicts in Africa and to prevent the eruption of further conflicts include the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the legal instruments on unconstitutional changes of government and the conflict prevention mechanisms within the African Union, such as the Peace and Security Council and the Panel of the Wise. Similar mechanisms within subregional organizations, such as the early warning system and the Mediation and Security Council of the Economic Community of West African States, are additional important manifestations in this regard. They are also complemented by other efforts in other subregions, such as the efforts of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in this context that were just mentioned by the Foreign Minister of South Africa.

These efforts should be seen in the framework of the larger context of dealing with various stages of conflicts in our continent, including efforts within the framework of Africa's significant contribution to United Nations peacekeeping missions, including the first hybrid operation, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, as well as African Union operations mandated by the Security Council, such as the African Union Mission in the Sudan and the African Union Mission in Somalia.

The African Group believes that efforts to enhance conflict prevention, particularly in Africa, should be part of a strategic vision and a comprehensive approach which combine and make use of all tools within the framework of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in order to avoid the eruption of disputes and conflicts, and to avoid relapsing into conflict in countries in post-conflict situations. Such a comprehensive approach should include defining clear entry and exit strategies for peacekeeping, making full use of the synergies between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and building capacity in countries emerging from conflict situations. This should include enhancing the capacities of State institutions, strengthening civil society and further strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the African Union, while always maintaining the centrality of the national ownership principle.

On conflict prevention, the African Union believes that the increasing budget for United Nations peacekeeping operations should be an additional reason for devoting more attention to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, in order to move beyond the traditional conflict management approach, building on the steps taken by the United Nations in this regard since the 1992 report of Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali entitled "An Agenda for Peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping" (S/24111).

In this context, the African Group underscores that, in order to fulfil the aims of Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, there is a need for the United Nations to develop an integrated strategy in the field of conflict prevention that harnesses the capacities of the United Nations Development Group, the United Nations Development Programme, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the relevant areas.

That includes, inter alia, mediation, negotiation and good offices, along with other tools such as inter-group confidence-building and dialogue processes. That integrated strategy should be implemented in close cooperation and coordination with the tools existing within regional and subregional organizations. In this regard, the cooperative efforts in mediation between the United Nations and the African Union, which proved to be successful in early stages such as in

the case of Kenya, gives us an indication of the positive outcome of this kind of partnership.

In the meantime, while recognizing that the maintenance of international peace and security is the primary responsibility of the Security Council, the African Group believes that the development and capacity-building aspects of conflict prevention and conflict resolution makes it imperative that other United Nations bodies, particularly the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, give their input to any United Nations preventive diplomacy strategy.

In this regard, the Department of Political Affairs should continue to play a central role in activities related to conflict prevention, especially through its Mediation Support Unit and other capabilities and mechanisms available and with full cooperation with the Security Council and the General Assembly.

While understanding that the focus of our debate today is on preventive diplomacy, the African Group cannot ignore, in this context, the importance of achieving sustainable development in Africa, especially in countries emerging from conflict. For the success of our collective efforts in the field of conflict prevention, we have to depart from the basic assumption that development, peace and security and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. In this context, the Group looks forward to the high-level plenary meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in September as an opportunity to reaffirm the international community's commitment to development and sustainability in Africa.

This year, 2010, which has been designated by the African leaders as the Year of Peace and Security in Africa, coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the attainment of independence by 17 African countries. The African Group believes that this occasion should be seen as an opportunity for African countries, the United Nations, other international organizations, donors and partners to scale up their support for the African Union and other subregional organizations in order to enhance their capacities in the field of conflict prevention and conflict resolution to further promote peace, security and stability in Africa.

In this regard, allow me to stress the importance we attach to the 10-year capacity-building programme of the African Union. We believe that its full implementation would contribute to enhancing the capacity of the African Union in the areas of conflict prevention, particularly in terms of African Union mediation capacity.

Finally, Mr. President, allow me to thank you once again for organizing today's debate, which we consider a further step in making the best possible use of all our preventive tools and assets existing within the United Nations system as well as within the regional and subregional organizations in order to achieve our collective aspirations towards peace, stability and development.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): Germany aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

Nigeria is to be commended for having convened this important debate on conflict prevention with a special focus on Africa. Conflict prevention is one of the main challenges we face today, and the active engagement of the Security Council is crucial.

My Government welcomes the commitment of African nations to greater efforts to prevent conflicts from breaking out in the first place as well as to their resolution. The solving of the long-running dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon over the Bakassi peninsula and the Abyei Arbitration on border delimitation in Sudan are models in this regard. The African Union Border Programme aiming at conflict prevention through solving border issues is another success story, and Germany is pleased to be associated with it and actively supporting it.

Only last week, members of the Security Council and the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council held their annual consultative meeting. Strengthening the partnership for prevention between the United Nations, the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa should remain high on the agenda.

My Government has been encouraged by the spirit of cooperation between the United Nations, the AU and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development in preparing for the referendum in Sudan. As a troop and police contributor to both the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, Germany attaches high importance to an early resolution of the Darfur conflict

and full implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement. Germany stands ready to continue to provide assistance in constitution-building in Sudan.

The United Nations, in particular its Secretariat, has a wide range of preventive diplomacy tools at its disposal. Mediation, good offices, the use of special envoys, fact-finding missions ,and commissions of inquiry are instruments that have been used in the recent past. We have welcomed the creation of the Mediation Support Unit within the Department of Political Affairs and contributed to its activities through the relevant trust fund.

The creation of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was an important step in enhancing the United Nations ability to better deal with practical conflict prevention. Too many times in the past, "after the conflict" meant "before the conflict". Countries have emerged from and re-entered into conflict numerous times, often over a period of decades. The PBC now deals with various situations where there is a risk of lapsing and re-lapsing into conflict and has done valuable work since its creation in 2005.

During our chairmanship of the PBC, we pay special attention to the role of women in peacebuilding and to the cooperation with regional organizations such as the AU. Last week, the PBC and the AU Peace and Security Council met for the first time to discuss how they could further strengthen their cooperation. They agreed to support national efforts in conflict prevention.

Early engagement and cooperation between various actors are key to conflict prevention, but there is a wider dimension as well. As we all agreed in 2005, peace and security, human rights and sustainable development are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. We commend the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development for its promotion of sustainable growth and development based on the commitment to good governance, democracy, human rights and conflict resolution.

"Greater investment in prevention could save us considerable pain and expense." This is what the Secretary-General stated during one of the Council's latest meetings on the issue of conflict prevention (5735th meeting). It remains true. The Security Council, the international community as a whole and, of course, the individual Member States all have to shoulder their responsibility.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): At the outset, the Ghana delegation wishes to congratulate Nigeria on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of July and for the remarkable skill with which its delegation has guided the work of the Council since the beginning of the month. We are particularly pleased to see you, Your Excellency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, personally chair today's meeting. My delegation also wishes to commend Mexico for ably presiding over the Council last month.

Mr. President, the valuable concept paper your delegation prepared for this debate (S/2010/371, annex) highlights a variety of pertinent issues and dimensions of the important question of preventive diplomacy, with particular reference to Africa. My delegation will attempt to address some of them.

Today, the ebbing — if not the resolution — of the many violent conflicts that have afflicted the African continent presents an opportunity for its people and Governments, acting in partnership with the United Nations, to pay greater attention to preventive diplomacy as a strategy to prevent conflicts from breaking out in the first place and to prevent those countries emerging from conflicts of crises from experiencing a relapse or escalation, as the case may be.

For the people of Africa, the prevention of conflicts is no longer only a matter of peace and security, but also a development imperative. This paradigm shift is underscored in the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) and the protocol on the establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council, as well as in legal instruments and regional organizations such as the revised Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Treaty and the ECWOAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Mediation, Management and Resolution.

The international community, including Africa's development partners and the United Nations, needs to sustain and intensify engagement with Africa for the more effective implementation of the various African initiatives aimed at strengthening preventive diplomacy and enhancing the prospects for preventing conflicts on the continent. Those initiatives include the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the African Peer

Review Mechanism and the AU Framework for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, as well as the various African declarations against coups d'état and other unconstitutional changes in government.

These African initiatives are intended to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes. In that way, our commitment to preventive diplomacy should find expression in our relentless resolve and action to promote constitutional democracy underpinned by good political and economic governance, the promotion of the rule of law, respect for human rights, free and fair elections, social justice, including the equitable distribution of national resources in a non-discriminatory manner, the deepening of national integration and harmonious inter-ethnic relations. We must also commit ourselves to addressing other causes of conflict, including terrorism, corruption and transnational organized crimes such as illicit trafficking in drugs, arms and persons.

The role of women and that of civil society in this regard should not only be tolerated but encouraged to ensure that no section of society is left behind in our national, regional and international efforts to prevent conflicts.

Equally deserving of the more serious support of the international community are African initiatives and practical arrangements such as the African standby forces arrangement, intended to make Africans ready to undertake more effective preventive deployment of personnel or to intervene in conflicts in a timely and effective manner.

To redeem the promise of the Charter to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which plagued the peoples of the world in the last century, there is an urgent need for the international community to grant priority attention to the prevention of conflicts around the world, and in Africa in particular, which features in the overwhelming majority of the situations on the agenda of this Council.

It is time we saw the value of preventive diplomacy in terms of the incalculable cost of waiting until conflicts have erupted and the fact that when they do they occur, it takes a long time, and sometimes the sacrifices of a generation of youth, before it is finally resolved or simply brought under control. Simply put, we should value preventive diplomacy on the basis of the cost of doing little or nothing to prevent conflicts. When conflicts do occur, they destroy investments, retard social progress and undermine overall development in any given country or region.

To succeed in placing preventive diplomacy at the top of our agenda, we must also embrace a shift in thinking and new concepts such as the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and the incitement of such acts. This was recognized by world leaders in their adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (General Assembly resolution 60/1) and also finds a place as a treaty principle in article 4 of the AU Constitutive Act.

In conclusion, I wish to stress that preventive diplomacy will be taken more seriously if States and other international actors endeavour to strike an appropriate balance between the competing values and principles of sovereignty and solidarity, non-interference and non-indifference and sovereign independence and global interdependence.

I wish to recall the proposal made by Ghana in the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations calling for ways to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in areas of preventive diplomacy, including peacekeeping and peacebuilding, under the Charter, which has been generally welcomed favourably for further consideration in that Committee.

In this context, Ghana supports the presidential statement adopted today and looks forward to giving input on how to optimize the use of preventive diplomacy tools within the United Nations system and in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and other actors.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. McNee (Canada): I should like to join others in thanking you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Nigeria for having convened this important debate.

Preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention have been issues of increasing priority for the Council over the past two decades. This makes good sense, because the financial and human costs of trying to quell violent conflicts far outstrip those associated with preventing their escalation.

While the international community has made progress in managing conflict, it continues to struggle

to prevent conflict. Africa is increasingly demonstrating clear leadership on peace and security challenges on the continent, including preventing political crises. The African Union (AU) was the first to deploy peacekeeping missions in Burundi, the Sudan, Somalia and the Comoros. It has also consistently intervened, in collaboration with the regional economic communities and with the help of African leaders, in the mediation and resolution of political crises, such as in Madagascar, Guinea and Niger.

The AU's Peace and Security Architecture, along with the complementary mechanisms in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other local and regional approaches to preventive diplomacy, including civil society initiatives, show great promise for stopping violent conflicts before they spiral out of control.

In our view, the Council must continue to support those efforts and fulfil its own responsibility for preventive diplomacy. In a 2009 presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/8), the Council declared its intention to remain engaged in all stages of the conflict cycle, including in support of mediation as an important means for the pacific settlement of disputes wherever possible before they evolve into violence.

Canada believes that three areas in particular deserve the Council's attention: preventive action, proactive action and integrated and coherent action.

First, preventive action, in particular preventive diplomacy, requires advanced warning that there is a risk of violence and knowledge about the root causes and nature of a potential conflict. Perhaps most importantly, it requires translation of the available information into concrete analysis and timely action.

What the international community truly lacks is a consistent means of bridging analysis and policy — of synthesizing data into effective analysis and rapidly linking early warning analysis with effective policy direction. The Security Council has sometimes filled this niche, but it could improve its contribution to preventive diplomacy by increasing its attention to the relationship between analysis and policy direction.

Secondly, Canada calls on the Security Council to be more proactive. In his report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1625 (2005) (S/2008/18), the Secretary-General outlined a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention. Canada fully endorses the examples of proactive action by the Council cited in the report, including the deployment of United Nations missions with political mandates to conduct mediation, conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

The Council is also increasingly using targeted sanctions as a proactive measure to deter parties from choosing violence to resolve conflicts. The Council must use all of these powerful tools more proactively, consistently and, we would suggest, with greater conviction.

(*spoke in French*)

Thirdly, Canada is pleased to note recent marked improvements in the United Nations system with regard to integrated coherent action. Canada welcomes the joint strategy on gender equality and mediation of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), as well as the efforts of the Secretary-General and Member States to realize the full and influential participation of women in peace processes.

Canada also recognizes the importance of the collaboration between the DPA and the United Nations Development Programme to deploy peace and development advisers, as well as the positive role of the Mediation Support Unit in working with United Nations country teams. Once a situation has become explosive, the United Nations system will be able to achieve its full potential in the area of preventive diplomacy only by using all its resources through a concerted action.

Regional and subregional capacities, in particular of the African Union and other African organizations, must be strengthened. Increased capacity to break the links among terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime is particularly critical, as well as capacity to support the rule of law and strengthened mediation capacities.

Canada is committed to supporting global peace and security. Leaders at the recent summit of the Group of Eight (G8) endorsed the Muskoka Declaration. Canada also invited African leaders to the Summit to discuss not only development, but also issues related to peace and security.

The Muskoka Declaration outlines a set of three interrelated initiatives aimed at strengthening civilian

security systems, in particular civilian reinforcements for stabilization, peacebuilding and rule of law actions; strengthening maritime security capacity; and international police peace operations. These three G8 initiatives aim to reduce conflict-related instability, protect civilians during armed conflict, counter terrorism, combat piracy and transnational crime and help establish an enabling environment for growth, investment and democratic development. Thus they are intended to promote peace and security, while recognizing that solutions to problems of the African continent are best found in Africa itself.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list. I therefore intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.